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# CONTEMPORARY Italian ART

PAINTINGS
DRAWINGS
SCULPTURE

THE ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1955

# Contemporary Italian Art

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*By courtesy of the Italian Ministry of Education*

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# Introduction

Five years ago an exhibition of modern Italian art was held at the Tate Gallery, but its scope was deliberately limited. It began with some landmarks of futurist art, notably by Boccioni, Balla and Carra, and included a rich showing of the 'scuola metafisica' founded by de Chirico. A third and deliberately reactionary group, the 'Novecento', was represented by Funi and Sironi; while Modigliani, de Pisis and Campigli, defying any rigid classification but more widely known outside their own country, added lustre to their respective periods. The exquisite Bolognese purist, Morandi, was sparsely represented, but was the subject of an extensive one-man show last year. The new generation of abstractionists and the more successful younger painters who, with the end of the war, were able to travel again, and were to receive the full impact of modern European art from other countries at the first post-war Biennale in 1948, were purposely excluded with a view to their being the subject of a fresh exhibition — the present one which consists predominantly of works done during the past two years.

Leader of the revolt against the Novecento was Birolli who, immediately after the war, reorganized a new movement accompanied by a manifesto signed by eleven artists under the title 'Fronte nuovo delle arti'. Among the original signatories were Cassinari (who resigned shortly afterwards), Guttuso, Santomaso, Vedova and Viani, all of whom, with the important exception of Guttuso, are shown here. The neo-realism of Levi and Brancaccio gives a balance to the paintings, while among the sculptors Consagra and Greco illustrate opposite tendencies, the one towards abstraction and the other towards a contemporary classical idiom. The choice of artists and of the paintings and sculpture was made by a committee of artists specially formed for the purpose during the Biennale held at Venice last year. Our grateful thanks are due to Dr De Angelis d'Ossat, Director-General of Antiquities and Fine Arts in the Ministry of Education at Rome, and to his colleagues who have been responsible for the necessary administrative arrangements in Italy.

P.J.

## Afro Basaldella

Born in Udine, 4th March 1912. Lives in Rome. Has held one-man exhibitions in Milan (1932), New York (1950), Rome (1953).

1 *La Sopraffazione*, 1952. Oil on canvas, $68\frac{7}{8} \times 57$ in.

2 *Lest we Forget*, 1952. Oil on canvas, $27\frac{5}{8} \times 39\frac{3}{8}$ in.

3 *The Quiet Stone*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $27\frac{5}{8} \times 39\frac{3}{8}$ in.

4 *The Boy with the Top*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $27\frac{5}{8} \times 35\frac{1}{2}$ in.

5 *Recumbent Figure*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $35\frac{5}{8} \times 31\frac{1}{2}$ in.

## Mirko Basaldella

Born in Udine, 28th September 1910. Lives in Rome. Principal one-man exhibitions: Rome (1935, 1952, 1954), Turin (1936), New York (1947, 1948, 1950), Milan (1951), Venice Biennale (1954). Won the Second Prize in the international contest for the 'Unknown Political Prisoner', held in London in 1953. He has also worked on several public monuments. For the Mausoleum of the 'Fosse Ardeatine' in Rome he made the bronze doors.

6 *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, 1954. Brass, $78 \times 40$ in.

7 *The Cock*, 1949. Brass, height 31 in.

8 *Lao Tse's Hermitage*. Ink drawing, $41 \times 22\frac{3}{4}$ in.

9 *Evocations*. Ink drawing, $42\frac{1}{4} \times 23\frac{3}{4}$ in.

10 *The Knight*. Ink drawing, $43\frac{1}{2} \times 34$ in.

## Renato Birolli

Born in Verona, 10th December 1906. Lives in Milan. Principal one-man exhibitions: Milan, Venice, Rome, New York. Signed the manifesto 'New Front of Art' in 1946.

**11** *Blue and Green in Liguria*, 1952. Oil on canvas, 26 × 36⅝ in.

**12** *Etruscan Necropolis*, 1953. Oil on canvas, 36¼ × 48 in.

**13** *Sea Story*, 1953–54. Oil on canvas, 36⅝ × 47¼ in.

**14** *Sea*, 1954. Oil on canvas, 24⅞ × 78¾ in.

**15** *Vineyard*, 1954. Oil on canvas, 50⅞ × 24⅞ in.

**16** *Marine Engines*, 1954. Oil on canvas, 39⅜ × 27⅝ in. (PLATE IV.)

## Giovanni Brancaccio

Born in Pozzuoli, Naples, 2nd February 1903, where he lives. First exhibition in 1929. Teaches painting at the Accademia di Belle Arti at Naples.

**17** *Still Life*, 1952. Oil on canvas, 15½ × 18½ in.

**18** *Still Life*, 1953. Oil on canvas, 16 × 18½ in.

**19** *Neapolitan Boy*, 1953. Oil on canvas, 30 × 24½ in.

**20** *Girl with a Comb*, 1953. Oil on canvas, 26 × 20¾ in.

**21** *Little Fisherman*, 1953–54. Oil on canvas, 45 × 63 in.

**22** *Figures*, 1953–54. Oil on canvas, 43¾ × 31¼ in. (PLATE I.)

## Bruno Cassinari

Born in Piacenza, 29th October 1912. Lives in Milan. In 1939 joined the 'Corrente' movement. In 1946 he signed the manifesto 'New Front of Art'. Principal one-man exhibitions: Antibes (1950), Modena (1951), Copenhagen (1951), Venice Biennale (1952), Milan (1953 54). Taranto Award in 1951. Award of the Venice Biennale in 1952.

**23** *Port of Antibes*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $39\frac{3}{8} \times 51\frac{1}{4}$ in.

**24** *Luisa*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $27\frac{5}{8} \times 19\frac{3}{4}$ in.

**25** *Figure*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $47\frac{1}{4} \times 23\frac{5}{8}$ in.

**26** *Trees beside the Sea*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $32 \times 26$ in.

**27** *Landscape*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $23\frac{5}{8} \times 27\frac{5}{8}$ in.

**28** *A Port*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $27\frac{5}{8} \times 39\frac{3}{4}$ in.

## Pietro Consagra

Born in Mazzara, Trapani, 4th October 1920. Lives in Rome. In 1947 he joined the group 'Forma.' Principal one-man exhibitions: Venice (1948), Milan (1953). Represented in the permanent collection of the Tate Gallery.

**29** *Figures*, 1954. Iron, height $47\frac{1}{4}$ in.

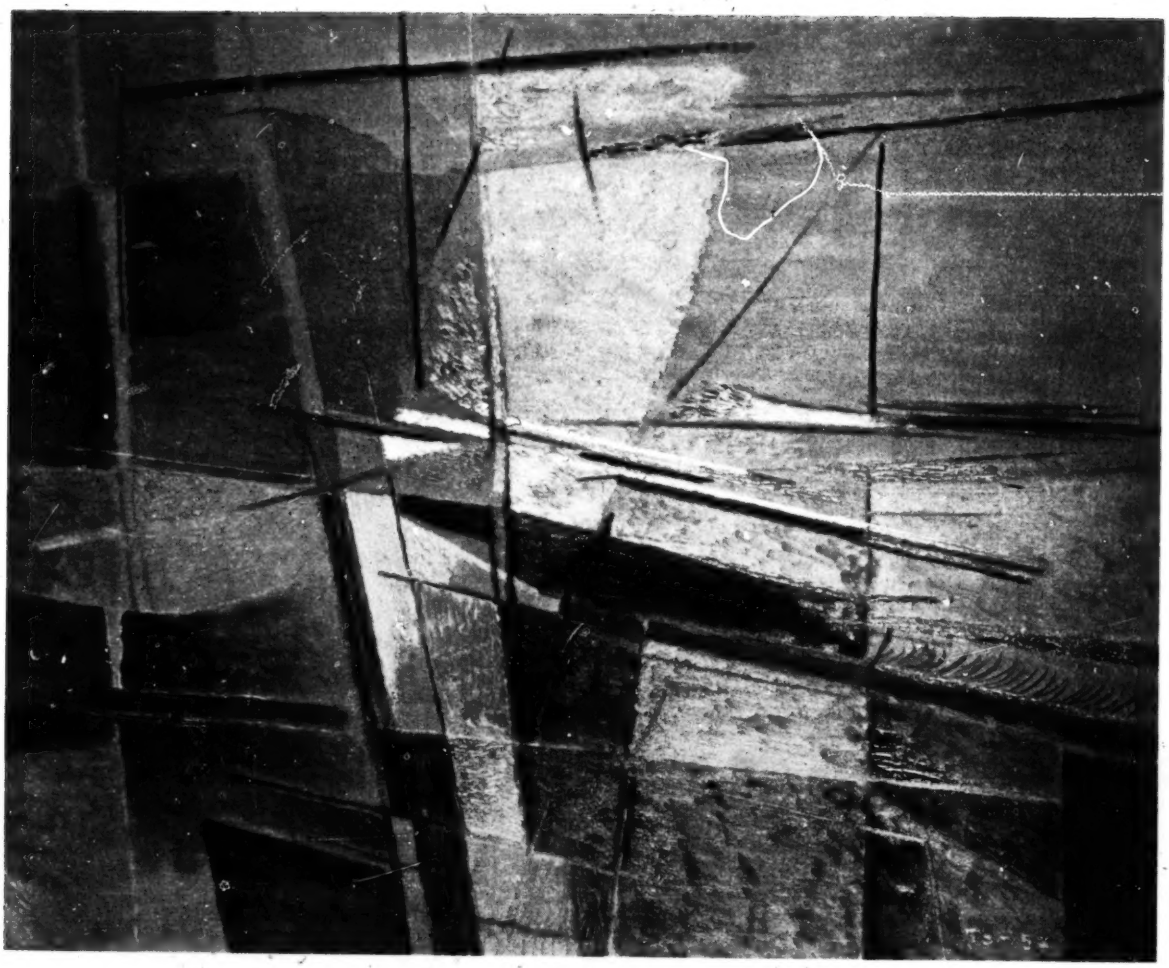
**30** *Colloquy*, 1954. Wood, height $68\frac{7}{8}$ in. (PLATE VI.)

**31** Ink drawing, $13 \times 17\frac{1}{4}$ in.

**32** Ink drawing, $13\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{1}{4}$ in.

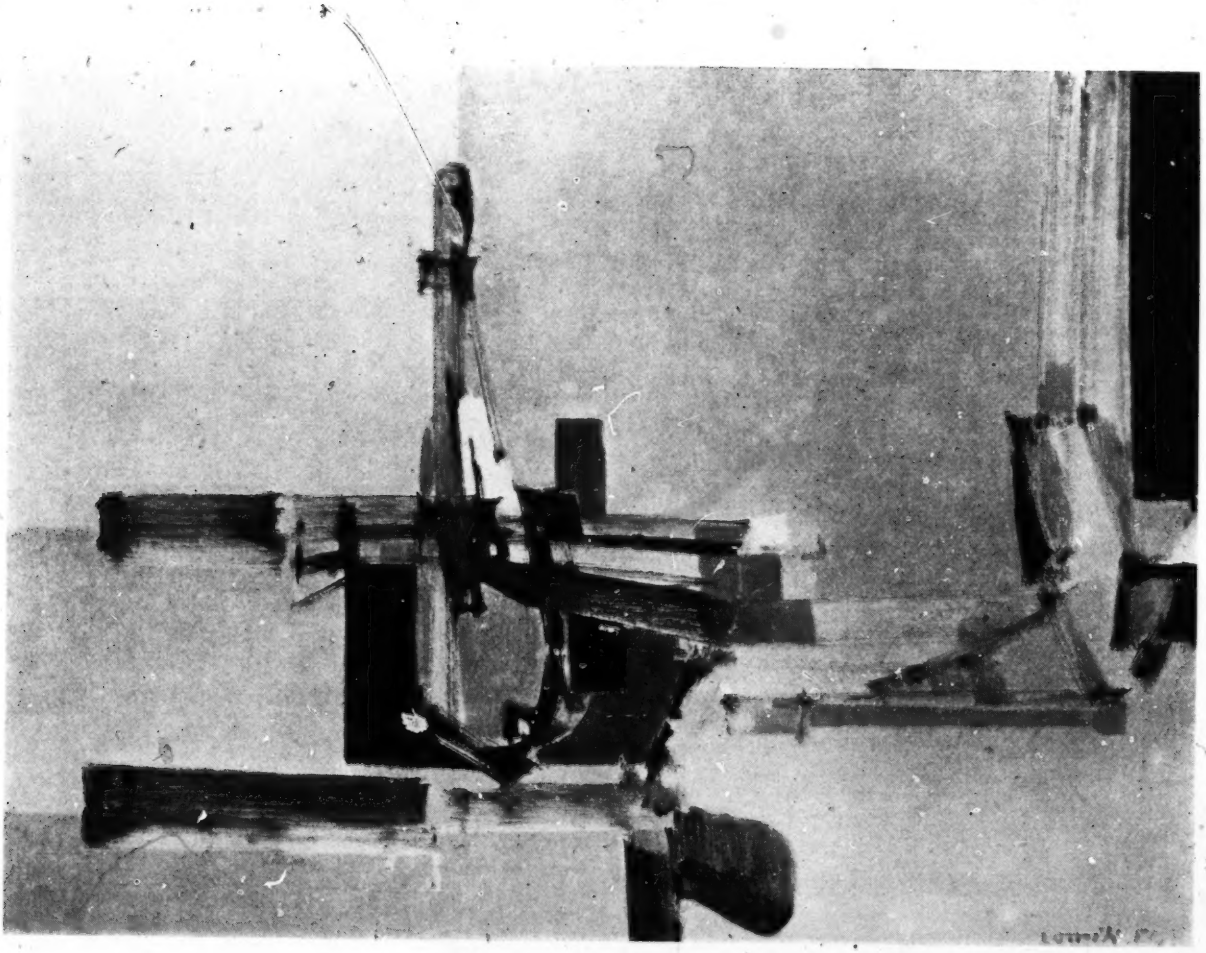
**33** Ink drawing, $9\frac{1}{4} \times 11$ in.

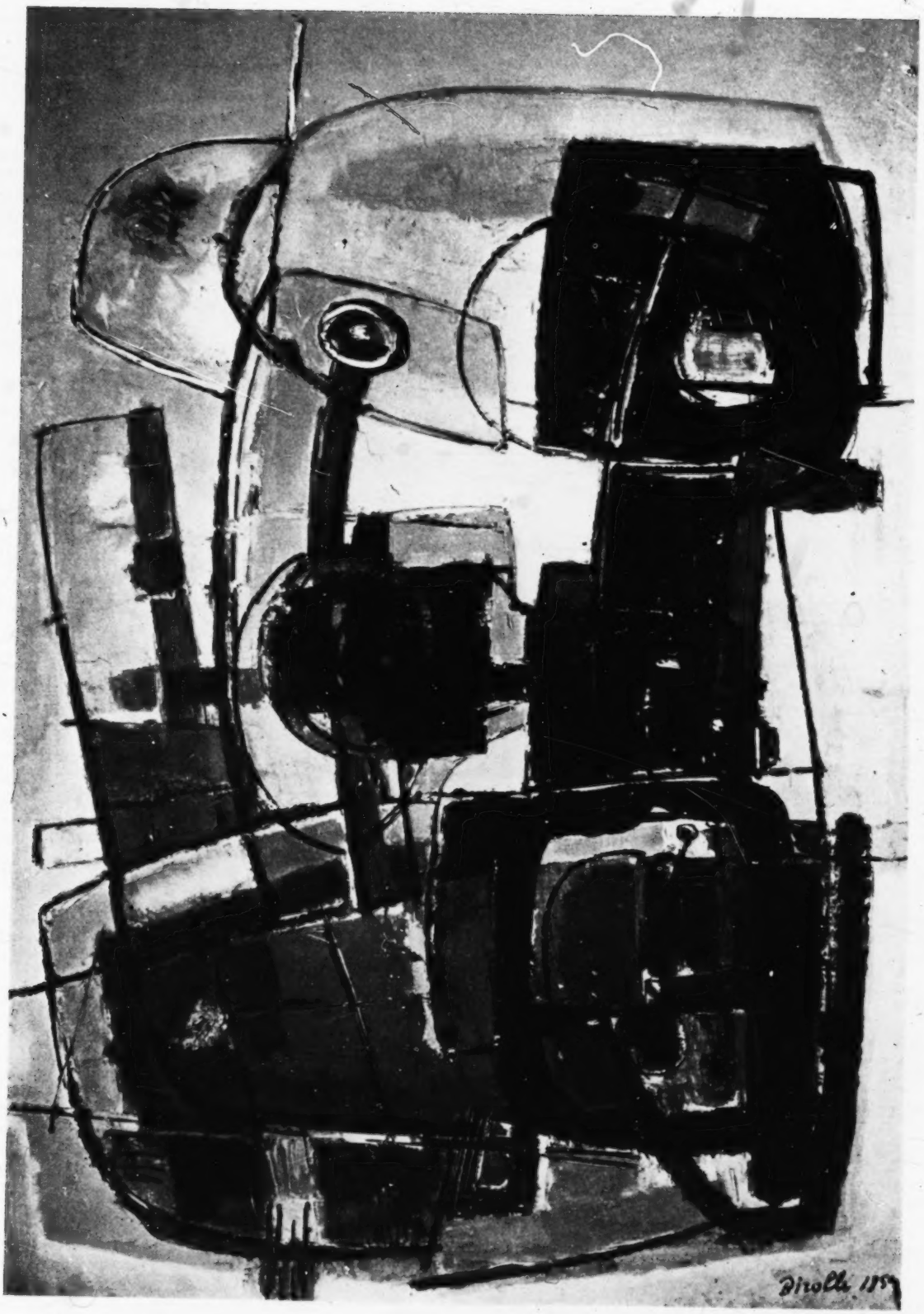
I **Giovanni Brancaccio.** *Figures.* Cat. No. 22



Il **Toti Scialoja.** *Moonlight*. Cat. No. 77

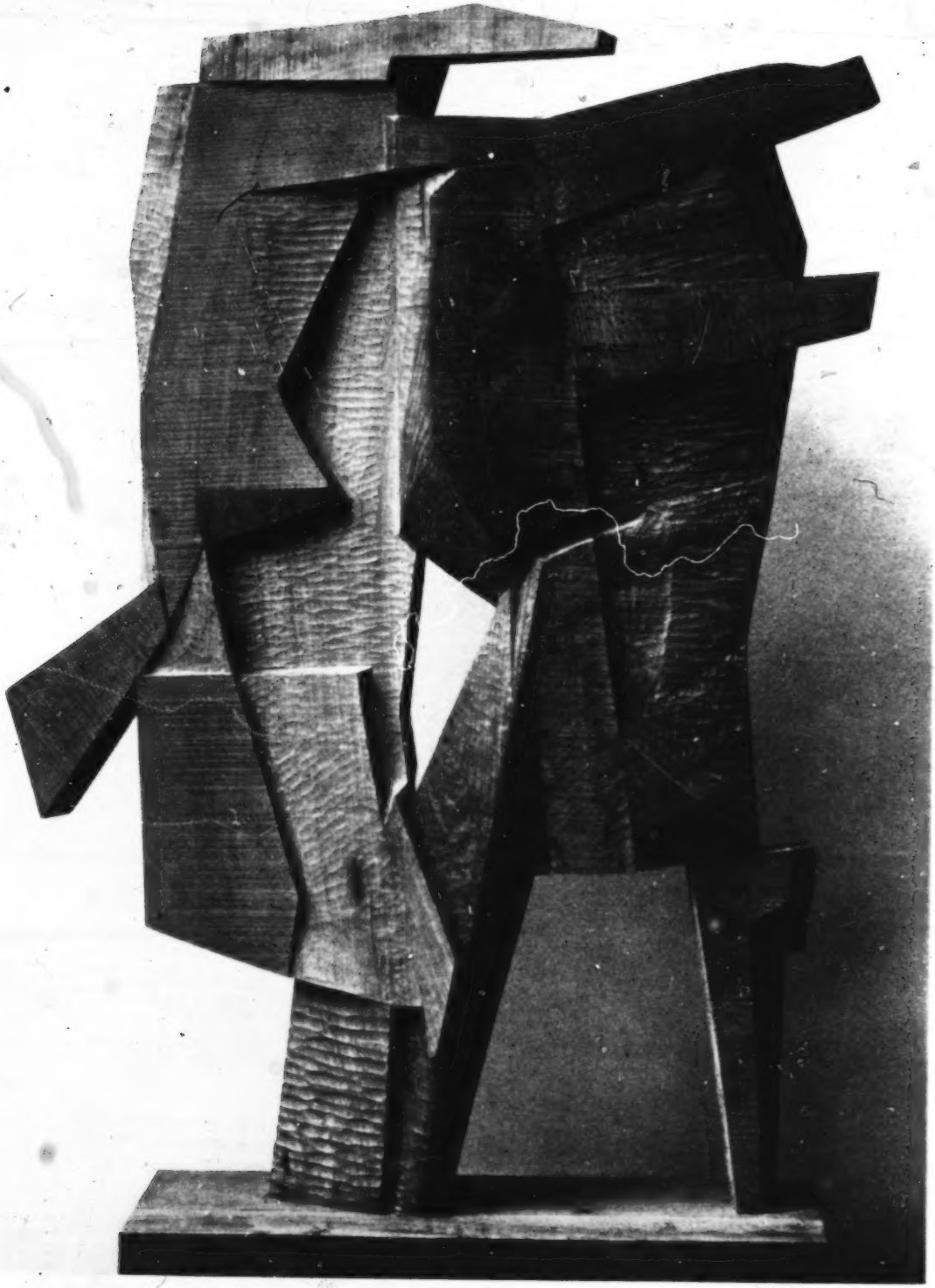
111 **Sergio Romiti.** *Composition.* Cat. No. 68





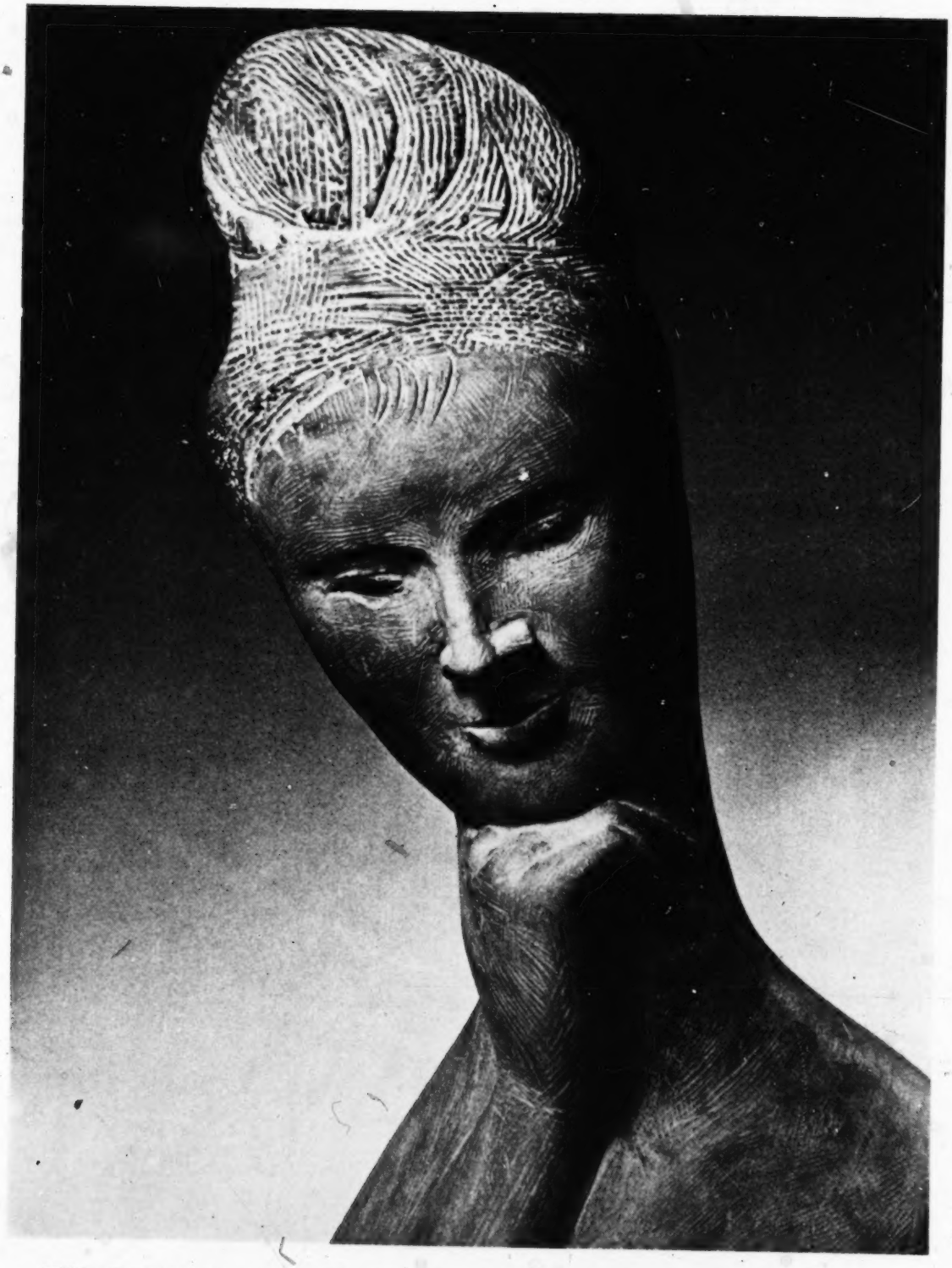

IV **Renato Birolli.** *Marine Engines.* Cat. No. 16

V **Giuseppe Santomaso**. *The Broken Down Hut*. Cat. No. 74



VI **Pietro Consagra.** *Colloquy*. Cat. No. 30

VII **Luciano Minguzzi.** *Cock*. Cat. No. 53



VIII **Emilio Greco.** *Anna.* Cat. No. 35

## Emilio Greco

Born in Catania, 11th October 1913. Lives in Rome. Teaches sculpture at the Accademia di Belle Arti at Carrara. Principal one-man exhibitions: Rome (1946, 1948, 1952, 1954), Naples (1950), London (1952), San Francisco (1952), Florence (1953). Saint-Vincent Award for Sculpture in 1948. First Prize in the national contest for a monument to Pinocchio.

**34** *Fairy's Head*, 1953. Terracotta, height 37½ in.

**35** *Anna*. Bronze, height 25¼ in. (PLATE VIII.)

**36** Pen drawing, 19¾ × 14⅝ in.

**37** Pen drawing, 17¼ × 12½ in.

**38** Pen drawing, 17 × 11¾ in.

**39** Pen drawing, 19¾ × 14⅝ in.

**40** Pen drawing, 19¾ × 14⅝ in.

## Carlo Levi

Born in Turin, 29th November 1902. Lives in Rome. In Turin belonged to the group of 'The Six'. At the moment, with Renato Guttuso, he is one of the most outstanding representatives of the Italian neo-realist school. His latest one-man exhibitions have been held in Rome (1954). He is also well-known as a writer, and his novels, *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, *The Watch*, and *Of Fear and Freedom*, have been widely read in this country.

**41** *Nino, Peppino and the Dog Barone*, 1936. Oil on canvas, 28¾ × 39⅜ in.

**42** *Booz*, 1950. Oil on canvas, 63 × 47¼ in.

**43** *Portrait of the Poet Pablo Neruda*, 1951. Oil on canvas, 24 × 19¾ in.

**44** *Portrait of Alberto Moravia*, 1953. Oil on canvas, 25⅝ × 19¾ in.

**45** *Antonio and the Pig*, 1953. Oil on canvas, 28¾ × 36¼ in.

**46** *The Neighbours*, 1954. Oil on canvas, 38¼ × 57½ in.

## Osvaldo Licini

Born in Monte Vidon Corrado, 1894, where he lives. His paintings have been exhibited in the Quadriennale of Rome in 1931, 1935, 1939, and in the Venice Biennale in 1948 and 1950. Main one-man exhibitions: Venice (1946, 1953).

**47** *The Rebel Angel*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $35\frac{1}{4} \cdot 45\frac{1}{4}$ in.

**48** *Venus*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $31\frac{1}{2} \cdot 39\frac{1}{4}$ in.

**49** *Pathos*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $32 \times 39\frac{1}{4}$ in.

**50** *Evening*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $25\frac{1}{2} \cdot 44$ in.

**51** *The Great Friend*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $37 \cdot 44$ in.

**51a** *The Rebel Angel*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $35 \times 45\frac{3}{4}$ in.

## Luciano Minguzzi

Born in Bologna, 24th May 1911, where he lives. Since 1933 he has appeared in the principal exhibitions in Italy and abroad. Main one-man exhibitions: Florence and Milan. Was a prize-winner in the international contest 'The Unknown Political Prisoner'. Is represented in the permanent collection of the Tate Gallery.

**52** *Man with a Bird*. Bronze, height 72 in.

**53** *Cock*. Bronze, height 28 in. (PLATE VII.)

**54** Lithograph, $18\frac{1}{4} \times 13$ in.

**55** Lithograph, $15\frac{1}{4} \times 13$ in.

**56** Etching, $15\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{3}{4}$ in.

**57** Etching, $9\frac{1}{4} \times 8$ in.

## Mauro Reggiani

Born in Nonantola, Modena, 2nd August 1897. Lives in Milan. First exhibited in 1922. Won the Graziano Award in 1954.

**58** *Composition No.* 9, 1951. Oil on canvas, 37 × 33 in.

**59** *Composition No.* 29, 1951. Oil on canvas, $32\frac{1}{4} \times 39\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**60** *Composition No.* 16, 1953. Oil on canvas, 35 × 42 in.

**61** *Composition No.* 20, 1953. Oil on canvas, $26 \times 31\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**62** *Composition No.* 22, 1954. Oil on canvas, $43 \times 29\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**63** *Composition No.* 24, 1954. Oil on canvas, $34\frac{1}{2} \times 45\frac{1}{2}$ in.

## Sergio Romiti

Born in Bologna, 14th April 1928, where he lives. Principal one-man exhibitions: Milan, Bologna, Turin, Basilea, Florence, Paris.

**64** *The Shelf*, 1950. Oil on canvas, $25\frac{5}{8} \times 33\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**65** *Kitchen Table*, 1951. Oil on canvas, $21\frac{5}{8} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**66** *Objects on a Table*, 1952. Oil on canvas, $19\frac{3}{8} \times 25\frac{5}{8}$ in.

**67** *Still Life*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $21\frac{5}{8} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**68** *Composition*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $21\frac{5}{8} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$ in. (PLATE III.)

**69** *A White Kitchen*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $27\frac{5}{8} \times 37\frac{3}{8}$ in.

## Giuseppe Santomaso

Born in Venice, 26th September 1907, where he lives. Signed the manifesto 'New Front of Art' in 1946. Award of the Comune di Venezia at the Venice Biennale in 1948. 'Esso' award (Rome 1951). First Award 'Fiera Letteraria' (Rome 1951). First Award at the Venice Biennale in 1954. Main one-man exhibitions: Amsterdam (1937), Paris (1939), Genoa (1940), Florence (1942), Milan (1942), Rome (1943), London (1953).

**70** *The Pile Driver*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $47\frac{1}{4} \cdot 31\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**71** *Grappling Hooks on the Adige*, 1953. Oil on canvas, $43\frac{3}{4} \times 27\frac{5}{8}$ in.

**72** *October Day in Marino*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $59 \times 47\frac{1}{4}$ in.

**73** *Storm on the Farm*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $59 \cdot 47\frac{1}{4}$ in.

**74** *The Broken Down Hut*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $47\frac{1}{4} \cdot 31\frac{1}{2}$ in. (PLATE V.)

## Toti Scialoja

Born in Rome, 16th December 1914, where he lives. Principal one-man exhibitions: Genoa (1940, 1941, 1946, 1947), Modena (1951), Florence (1954), Rome (1949, 1951, 1954), Turin (1941), Milan (1947 and 1954). Has worked for the theatre designing scenery and costumes for numerous shows and ballets in Rome, Venice, Florence, Bologna, and S. Paulo, Brazil. Teaches the technique of scenic design at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome.

**75** *The Lake*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $32\frac{1}{4} \times 32\frac{1}{4}$ in.

**76** *Window on to the Sea*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $45\frac{3}{4} \times 31\frac{7}{8}$ in.

**77** *Moonlight*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $28\frac{3}{4} \times 36\frac{1}{4}$ in. (PLATE II.)

**78** *Autumn Light*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $21\frac{1}{4} \times 31\frac{7}{8}$ in.

**79** *The Beach*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $27\frac{7}{8} \times 34\frac{5}{8}$ in.

**80** *Asphalt by Night*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $36\frac{1}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ in.

## Domenico Spinosa

Born in Naples, 1916, where he lives. Teaches drawing in the Liceo Artistico at Naples. Took part in important exhibitions in Italy and abroad. Won First Prize in the contest of the 'Lega Navale Italiana' in 1953. Award of the Accademia dei Filedoni at Perugia in 1954.

**81** *Still Life*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $29\frac{1}{2} \times 35\frac{1}{8}$ in.

**82** *Fishmonger's Stall*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $47\frac{1}{4} \times 43\frac{3}{4}$ in.

**83** *The Sewing Machine*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $29\frac{1}{2} \times 35\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**84** *Pink Still Life*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $29\frac{1}{2} \times 35\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**85** *Still Life with Umbrella*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $47\frac{1}{4} \times 31\frac{1}{2}$ in.

**86** *Afternoon at the Seaside*, 1954. Oil on canvas, $41\frac{3}{8} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$ in.

## Emilio Vedova

Born in Venice, 9th August 1919, where he lives. First exhibited in 1936. Joined the 'Corrente' Movement (Milan 1942) and the 'New Front of Art' (Venice 1946). Main one-man exhibitions: Milan (1948), Rome (1943, 1946), Turin (1946), Trieste (1946), Genoa (1942), Venice (1941, 1945, 1946, 1947), Modena (1953), New York (1951). Martini Award 1938; Volpi Award at the 1950 Biennale; Dufy Award at the 1952 Biennale; Morgante Award at the Second Biennale in Brazil.

**87** *From the Cycle of Nature No.* 3: *Palmaria*, 1953. Tempera on canvas, $57 \times 74\frac{7}{8}$ in.

**88** *From the Cycle of Nature No.* 4, 1953. Tempera on canvas, $51\frac{1}{4} \times 66\frac{7}{8}$ in.

**89** *From the Cycle of Nature No.* 8: *Unquiet Space*, 1953. Tempera on canvas, $51\frac{1}{4} \times 66\frac{7}{8}$ in.

## Emilio Vedova *(continued)*

**90** *From the Cycle of Nature No. 10: Unquiet Space*, 1953. Tempera on canvas, 57 × 74⅞ in.

**91** *From the Cycle of Protest No. 6: As a Protest*, 1953. Tempera on canvas, 51¼ × 74⅞ in.

**92** *From the Cycle of Protest No. 8: The Workshops of the World*, 1953. Tempera on canvas, 57 × 74⅞ in.

## Alberto Viani

Born in Quistello, Mantua, 26th March 1906. Joined in 1946 the 'New Front of Art'. In 1948 he was awarded the First Prize in the competition for young sculptors at the Venice Biennale. In 1949 he won the First Prize for sculpture at Varese. Held a one-man exhibition at the Venice Biennale in 1952.

**93** *Head of a Man*, 1953. Plaster, height 53 in.

**94** *Female Torso*, 1954. Plaster, height 60 in.